



**Ogden-Jenner Community Meeting #2**  
**Proposed Consolidation of Edward Jenner Elementary Academy of the Arts and**  
**Ogden International School**

**Tuesday, January 16, 2018**  
**Jenner Campus**  
**1119 N. Cleveland Avenue**  
**5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**CPS Staff in Attendance:**

Brian Metcalf (Network 6 Chief), Cheryl Nevins, and Natasha Patterson

Member of Talent, Member of ODLSS, Member of Temporary Housing, Laurie Deidre (SEL)

**Community Leaders:**

Michael Beyer, Alicia Beyer with Ald. Burnett

**CPS Presentation:**

Brian Metcalf (Network 6 Chief of Schools) began by providing a welcome to all, introduced attendees and participants and gave a preview of the meeting objectives. Mr. Metcalf encouraged those that would like to be heard but did not want to speak in public to please email all comments and concerns to [transitions@cps.edu](mailto:transitions@cps.edu) or submit a written comment card. Mr. Metcalf reminded every speaker he/she will have two minutes to speak.

Cheryl Nevins (Regional Portfolio Planner, Planning and Data Management) explained the proposed action process. The legal timeline for this action process was as follows: October 1, 2017 CPS published draft guidelines for school actions; December 1, 2017 CPS proposed school actions and sent notice letters and draft transition plans; January 2018 CPS holds two community meetings and one public hearing prior to any recommendation to the Board; February 2018 or later CPS makes recommendations to Board after community meetings and hearing. Board will vote on recommended school actions at February Board meeting or later. Ms. Nevins stated that the community engagement dated back to 2015 and the Jenner/Ogden Steering Committee formed in approximately May 2016. There have been 3 additional well-attended community meetings, held between February 2017 and April 2017. The committee has created Ogden and Jenner integration efforts for students and parents like JOLT (Jenner Ogden 2 Learning Together) for students and SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity)

for teachers. Ms. Nevins related that the entire draft transition plan including early steering committees efforts, changes, and draft plan are available at: [http://cps.edu/About\\_CPS/Policies\\_and\\_guidelines/Pages/transitionsandguidelines.aspx](http://cps.edu/About_CPS/Policies_and_guidelines/Pages/transitionsandguidelines.aspx) under the School Actions tab.

Ms. Nevins stated that the most common desires they heard expressed during these community meetings were: 1) the desire to keep the International Baccalaureate academic program Ogden has built, 2) provide robust support for transitioning students and teachers not previously trained in IB curriculum, 3) Maintain Jenner's strong culture including teachers and staff and continue to honor the N.E.S.T philosophy, 4) provide pre-K for Jenner families, 5) provide transportation between campuses.

### **Public Comments:**

Justice Stamps, *Former Teacher*

Claims the boundaries in Ogden are skewed and affirms that boundaries were made along racial lines and consolidation is not explicit enough. She requests more clarity on the name of the new school.

Ianna Kachoris , *Parent of Ogden Student*

Supports the idea of the name of Ogden-Jenner merger in order to combine schools in order to remove disparities of redistricting in Gold Coast and Cabrini Green neighborhoods. Believes the proposal is data driven and can benefit both schools and is community driven.

Stephanie Newmark, *Middle School Div. Learner Teacher at Ogden*

Has taught and accommodated students of various levels of learning and believes the merging of both student bodies will unite without conflict or issues. She advocates for continuing

Thea Kachoris-Flores, Parent of Ogden Student

Believes talking to *Community Members* of both communities and areas surround schools will improve this transition plan and included the details necessary to consolidate.

KW, *Student at Ogden*

Has enjoyed going to Jenner over the years and has built a good relationships and values them. Advocates for continuing with the merger.

Leslie Fineburg, *Parent of Ogden Student, Alum*

Her biggest concern is that Jenner is a community school and believes that the boundaries should be redrawn because the demand for housing in the community will require CPS to contribute more funds into the consolidation to accommodate new students moving in and being born in the community. There should be a better transition or more preparation for the coming year.

CW, *Student at Ogden*

Believes school has safe spaces for students of color to ease the transition and maintain a mentorship program for new students. Is in favor of the action as long as it is genuine.

Jezail Jackson, *Teacher at Ogden East*

Has gone through a school closing, and believes the International Baccalaureate (IB) programming is incredibly important and teaches values. Wants parents to know that teachers will meet the needs of all students regardless of income level, color, religion, learning levels, etc.

Jeffrey Wagner, *English Teacher at Ogden*

There is a large diversity of students and classrooms. Progress of students have made considerable progress and are reading at the correct level. There are grouping strategies where students work with other students at their level. He advocates for IB in order to improve these strategies.

Kelly Shereyh, *Teacher at Ogden West Campus*

Supports merger between Jenner and Ogden. Differentiation already occurring and students testing at different levels are to be catered to. Has met Jenner teachers and concluded Jenner teachers are partaking in similar strategies.

Seth Limmer, *Rabbi and Steering Community Member*

Relationship with CPS has grown and improved. Focus in on diversity. Hopes the merger will be a success and reaffirms that communities will continue to advocate for their educational desires.

Kelly Shelton, *Interim Principal of Jenner*

Believes this opportunity will make a difference and realize the efforts of educators and the community by eradicating ignorance and hatred within the community. She fully supports the merger. Believes teachers are well-equipped to meet the needs of students and more.

Michael Beyer, *Principal at Ogden*

Supports merger and believes the quality of education will not be negatively affected and will to desegregate communities. Reassures school staff and faculty will commit more time and effort to this merger. \*Provided event school list to everyone\*

Randall K. Blakey, *Pastor and Executive of Near North Community Program*

Affirms the competence and excellence of teachers and administrators at both Ogden and Jenner will make the transition successful. Believes the community's commitment to its children will make this situation better.

Joan Moore, *Community Member*

Hopes and believes this process will progress successfully.

Debby Pope, Retired educator and worked for CTU

Has seen the changes in the community especially in regard to gentrification and redistricting. This is important opportunity to desegregate the community and provide unique learning important for students by exposing them to diverse set of fellow students. Teachers are dedicated to students and this is an opportunity to come together and collectively improve educational outcomes and our society.

Tara Stamps, *Community Member*

Has been in Cabrini-Green for many years and has advocated for the equity, freedom, and justice for all our students. Believes teachers, students, and *Community Members* need to be included in process to ensure teachers keep their jobs. She also requests there be capacity at both schools.

Tracy Alvarez, *Community Member*

Expresses support for the merger. Asked: what is the status of the preschool being offered for the parents in the area? Would a merger include surround areas or only immediate areas?

Paul Hull, *Parent of Ogden Student*

He asked:

"Are there data to support the Jenner-Ogden merger? Will \$1.8M support schools over 3 years and what are the plans? Is there going to be an expansion for the school in order to ensure CPS has sufficient capacity for this growing community? Are there any plans for the high school?"

Michael Arnold, *Parent of Ogden Student*

For those who weren't here, I asked what is in it for the people at Ogden. Ogden is the 10<sup>th</sup> most diverse school out of 600 at CPS. The plan says that this merger should happen because Ogden is overcrowded. Today Ogden is not overcrowded. There has been so much pain in the Jenner community. People have talked about Martin Luther King, racism, segregation and unfair boundaries. We are in one of CPS' wealthiest school districts and there are no wealthy kids that go to school here. We are standing in one of the most white boundaries in all of CPS. Anyone skeptical or against this merger it is assumed that it is related to race. I don't think that is fair to say about the people of Ogden. It is the 10<sup>th</sup> most diverse school. So many of us love diversity and celebrate it. If you think your school isn't good, call Dr. Beyer and he will let you in. You do not need CPS to say what is best for your kid.

Barbara Armour, *Parent*

Supports merger, but is concerned about the teachers in this transition.

Sheena Davis Croston, *Principal Croston's wife*

Principal Croston was at Jenner and awaited a call from CPS. Received the call and received an offer and was passionate about working at Jenner. He was also passionate about the merger of Jenner and Ogden.

Liliya Vitulli, *Community Member and Parent*

Supports the merger and believes it will bring together the community.

Sharon Wheeler, *Program Manager for Near North Unity Program*

Reminds us that we must make decisions based on hope and not fear.

Michele Dreczynski, *Community Member*

Near North side has had a history of segregation and believes IB will continue to provide access to great educational opportunities to students of all backgrounds.

FM, Student and *Community Member*

Opportunity with Ogden-Jenner is important and hopes that this school will be legitimate and the best school.

DS, Student and *Community Member*

Supports merger and advocates for desegregation of schools in the whole city of Chicago and that this merger is only first step in doing this. The boundary of the school will be the largest of any of the city.

Heidi Wagman, *Chicago Sinai*

Supports merger and believes that members of the community will make this merger successful.

Kizzy Mccray, *Parent & Community Member*

Jenner has been an important educational resources and has provided many opportunities for many students in Chicago. She support the merger for bettering the lives of all students in the community regardless of their income or racial background.

Michael Beyer, *Principal at Ogden*

Extended invitation to an Ogden East Campus event on February 2nd, with former CPD officer speaking about class and race, and its history. Also planning to have monthly potlucks with parents and teachers from Ogden and Jenner so everyone can get to know each other and become friends.

DS, Student and *Community Member*

Wanted to also state that the merger is about mutual enrichment from both communities, with two places coming together to make each other better.

Tara Stamps, *Community Member*

Wanted to know how soon questions will be answered. Mentions fundraiser for 8th grade trip, screening of 70 Acres and Voices of Cabrini. Invited attendees.

Deidre Brewster, *Jenner/Ogden Community Steering Committee Member*

Stated that fear is an emotion in the mind that can be controlled and she is on the steering committee to control what happens in her community and environment. She spoke about hearing undertones of racism and that she's taken workshops on diversity and awareness of racism. She stated that though no racial slurs were used, the undertones were there and summed up the sentiments of others as 'you stay over there and we'll stay over here'. She stated that she learned over the years that love is what will win and that sometimes love is sweet and other times it is stern and direct. She requested parents to not take fears home and plant them in their children but instead get some therapy for that. She stated that it is a disease that needs to be purged and she's tired of tiptoeing around. She stated to one individual that we will love you out of

your fear and we will love your children as well. She stated she will not look away and that they should cease the undertones of racism.

Deborah Sheriff, *Teacher at Jenner*

Has had field trips with teachers at Ogden and students have comingled and have already started to transition into this merger. She is in favor of the merger.

Brian Metcalf has ended the meeting at 8:00 pointing parents toward resource tables for their information.